

children, and promise them. Satan promises them only to deceive' (*al-Israa* 64).”

Allah s warning to us concerning Satan

The Quran warns us at length about Satan since he is such a great test for humanity. Allah warns humans about Satan’s misguidance and his desire to mislead people. Allah says,

يَبْنِيْ عَادَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمْ الشَّيْطٰنُ

“O Children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you...” (*al-Araaf* 27). And,

اِنَّ الشَّيْطٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوْهُ عَدُوًّا

“Lo! The devil is an enemy for you, so treat him as an enemy” (*Faatir* 6). Again,

وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطٰنَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ

خُسْرًا اِنَّا مُبِيْنًا

“Whoever chooses Satan for an ally instead of Allah is verily a loser and his loss is manifest” (*al-Nisaa* 119).

The enmity from Satan will not change or vanish. This is because Satan sees the father of the humans, Adam, as the cause for his being expelled from paradise and the reason behind Allah’s curse upon Satan. There is no doubt that he will seek revenge from Adam and his offspring.

قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَكَ هَذَا الَّذِي كَرَّمْت عَلَيَّ لَئِنِ أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَى
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَأَحْتَنِكَنَّ ذُرِّيَّتَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

“He said: Do You see this (creation) that you have honored above me? If you give me grace until the Day of Resurrection I will verily seize his seed, save but a few” (*al-Israa* 62).

The scholars who deal in matters related to behavior and conduct often discuss the shortcomings and weaknesses of humans’ souls but they do not put enough stress on this fierce enemy, although Allah warns us against him at many different places in the Quran. And He orders us to seek refuge from him while Allah does not order us to seek refuge from our souls anywhere. Only in the opening to an oratory did the Prophet (peace be upon him) state about the evil in the souls, “And we seek refuge in Allah from the evil in our souls and the evil of our deeds.”

The goals or the aims of Satan

Long-term Goal

Satan has one long term goal. This is his ultimate ambition. This goal is to see humans thrown into the hellfire and prevented from entering paradise.

إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ

أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

“He only summons his faction to be owners of the flaming Fire” (*Faatir* 6).

Short-term Goals

The above is Satan’s long-term goal. But he has many short-term goals including:

1. To get the slave involved in disbelief and idolatry¹

This is done by calling people to worship beings or idols other than Allah. Satan calls the people to disbelief in Allah and to disobey His commands.

كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنكَ

“Or the likeness of Satan when he tells man to disbelieve, but when he disbelieves, he says, ‘Verily, I am innocent of you’” (*al-Hashr* 16).

Imam Muslim records in his *Sahih* on the authority of Iyaadh ibn Hamaar that the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed them saying,

أَلَا إِنَّ رَبِّي أَمَرَنِي أَنْ أَعَلِّمَكُمْ مَا جَهِلْتُمْ مِمَّا عَلَّمَنِي يَوْمِي هَذَا كُلُّ مَالٍ
نَحَلْتُهُ عَبْدًا حَلَالٌ وَإِنِّي خَلَقْتُ عِبَادِي حُنَفَاءَ كُلَّهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمْ أَتَتْهُمْ
الشَّيَاطِينُ فَاجْتَالَتْهُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِمْ وَحَرَمَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا أَحَلَلْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَمَرْتَهُمْ
أَنْ يُشْرِكُوا بِي مَا لَمْ أَنْزِلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا

¹ In reality, the consequences of this goal are the same as that of the previous goal if a person should die in a state of unbelief.—JL

“O people, Allah has commanded me to teach you that which you do not know which He has taught me today. (It is that) any bounty which I have conferred upon them is lawful for them. I have created my servants with a natural inclination toward My worship but the Devils turn them away from the right religion and he makes the things that are unlawful to be lawful and he orders them to make partners with Me although they have no authority to do so.”

2. If he is not able to lead them to disbelief, he leads them to sins¹

If he is not able to lead the slave to idolatry or disbelief, Satan does not despair. He then becomes pleased with things that are less than that, such as sins and disobedience to Allah. He also plants enmity and hatred in their ranks. Al-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah have recorded in their *Sunans*, with a *hasan* chain, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said,

أَلَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ آيسَ أَنْ يُعْبَدَ فِي بِلَدِكُمْ هَذَا أَبَدًا وَلَكِنْ سَيَكُونُ لَهُ طَاعَةٌ فِي بَعْضِ مَا تَحْنَقُرُونَ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ فَيَرْضَى بِهَا

“Verily, Satan has despaired that he should ever be worshipped again in this land of yours. But he will be obeyed in some of your actions that you consider small. And he will be pleased by that.” And it is recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari* and elsewhere,

¹ The second goal that the author should have stated is, “If Satan cannot involve the person in unbelief, he leads him to innovations and heresies.” Sufyaan al-Thauri stated, “Heresy is more beloved to Satan than sins.” This is because heresies involve disobedience towards Allah as well as the firm belief that the person is doing something good. This is a very dangerous combination as it then becomes very difficult to take the person away from that innovation. For more on this point, see Jamaal al-Din Zarabozo, “Innovations and Islam I: The Meaning of *Bida*,” *al-Basheer* (Vol. 1, No. 4, November 1987), pp.19-20.—JZ

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ أَيْسَ أَنْ يَعْبُدَهُ الْمُصَلُّونَ فِي جَزِيرَةِ الْعَرَبِ وَلَكِنْ فِي
التَّحْرِيشِ بَيْنَهُمْ

“Verily Satan despairs that he should ever be worshipped by the performers of prayer in the Arabian peninsula. But he will instigate between them.”¹ In other words, he will cause hatred and enmity to occur in their midst and he will incite them against each other. This is as Allah says in the Quran,

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ
وَالْمَيْسِرِ

“Satan seeks only to cast among you enmity and hatred by means of strong drink and games of chance...” (*al-Maaidah* 91). Satan enjoins every evil,

إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“He enjoins upon you only the evil and the foul, and that you should say concerning Allah that which *you* know not” (*al-Baqara* 169).

In sum, any action that is loved by Allah is hated by Satan and every act of disobedience that is hated by the Merciful is loved by Satan.

3. Blocking the slave from obeying Allah

It is not sufficient for him to call people to disbelief, idolatry and evil deeds. He also tries to block the way to any good deed. There is no path of goodness that man may follow except that he sits there, lurking

¹ Al-Ashqar stated that this hadith is from *Sahib al-Bukhari*. However, it seems that it is from *Sahib Muslim* and other sources but is not to be found in *Sahib al-Bukhari*. Allah knows best. —[Z]